Address of the State of the Sta

#### How the Bloody Doings of Charles IX. of France Inspired a German Composer of French Operas—Some Character-istics of the Presentation Noted.

cheerful monarch. He was immersed to the centre of his royal neck in extremely hot water all the time, and his efforts blot the Protestantism off the map of Europe issued in disappointment and grief. But how magnificently he spilled blood while he was at it. No wonder he took a strong liking to Charles IX. of France, who ordered the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Be well assured," wrote Philip, "that in furthering thus the affairs of God you are furthering your own still more." A wise and puissant aid of the Almighty was Charles Admiral Coligny had almost persuaded him to send an expedition of French Protestants against the Spaniards in the Netherlands, when some unrecorded Sparafucile in the pay of the noble house of Guise inserted a knife between the old seadog's ribs and caused him to lose his interest in

What has all this to do with opera? Well last night at the Metropolitan Opera House Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots" was sung for the first time this season. The climax of that delectable work, as all good operagoers do not know, is reached through the struggle between French Protestants and Catholics and is based on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Charles IX. does not figure in the book, but there is a most lovely young quee 1 of Navarre, Marguerite de Valois, who wears a dinner gown and all her diamonds out in her garden in the day time and who expresses her opinion of the political situation in France in glowing colora-

Then there is the Lutheran hymn, the "Marseillaise" of the Reformation, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott." Marre!, the faithful retainer of Raoul the hero of the opera, carries that air around with him wherever he goes and whenever he desires to reprove the giddy conduct of Catholic nobles or to proclaim his own fidelity, he turns it on with a sixteen-f oot stop. Meyerbeer makes it the theme of the prelude of the opera and we are led to understand that there are great musical doings with it.

It is not quite possible to forget, however, hat Claude Goudimel, the teacher of Falesrina, was slain in Paris in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Nor can we make a blank in our minds of Bach's Reformation cantata, which was performed so recently as last Thursday night by the Musical Art Society. There is much difference between the sort of music represented by Palestrina and Bach and that prepared for the edifica-tion of the operatic gournet by Jacob

"As for the introduced choral," said Schumann, "which sets Frenchmen beside themselves, I declare that if a pupil brought such a lesson in counterpoint to me I should certainly beg him to do better in future. certainly beg him to do better in future. How overladen, yet empty, how intentional, yet superficial! What blacksmith's work, that the mob may not fail to observe it, is this eternal chanting of Marcel's 'A Firm Fortress.' "Schumann, too, thought the much-praised effect of the benediction of the poignards easy to construct, and so it seems now. Then this great criticalled attention to Meyerbeer's cleverness in making contrasts to his stunning mass combinations by writing airs with accompaniments of one instrument. Cunning stagecraft, that!

stagecraft, that!

We may as well let Schumann finish the summary view of "Les Huguenots," for he was just. "Only envy and hatred can deny that the work contains many better things, many noble, sublime emotions. Thus, Marcel's battle song is effective, the page's song is lovely; most of the third act is interesting through the living poract is interesting through the living por-traiture of its national scenes, the first part of the duet between Valentine and Marcel from its character. So is the sextet

part of the duet between Valentine and Marcel from its character. So is the sextet interesting; the jesting chorus is in a comic vein; the dedication of the poignards has more than Meyerbeer's usual originality; and, above all, the following duet between Raoul and Valentine has flow of idea and musical workmanship. But what is all this compared to the commonness, distortion, unnaturalness, immorality and unmusical character of the whole?

After these kind and encouraging remarks by the man who proclaimed the genius of Chopin, the advent of Brahms and the threatening greatness of Wagner, the masterpiece of Meyerbeer may be dismissed. He was the Clyde Fitch of grand opera. "Les Huguenots" always draws a demonstrative audience. Each character exc pt poor De Hevers has a separate and special opportunity to perform vocal feats and after each the typical "Huguenots" audience always tries to get a repetition. Not to get a demand for an encore in this opera is to fail signally; but no one ever fails—at least, not at the Metropolitan Opera House.

"Les Huguenots" is an all-star opera.

no one ever fails—at least, not at the Metropolitan Opera House.

"Les Huguenots" is an all-star opera,
and its chief potency with the bargainhunting part of the public is its presentation of the opportunity to hear several highpriced stars at once. At the end of the
second act last night as the stars passed
before the curtain, the line-up consisted
of Mmes. Sembrich, Gadski and Scheff,
Messrs. Alvarez, Scotti, Journet and De
Reszke.

The conventional method of commenting on a performance such as that of last night is to call the roll of the singers and mention whether each was in good voice and whether whether each was in good voice and whether this one or that sang such or such an air well. That is routine criticism and as most performances of "Les Huguenota" are purely matters of routine it is suitable. But it is just a little wearisome, and not at all worth white

Let us summarize. Mme. Sembrich, Marguerite de Valois, not at all well and therefore pictorially more brilliant than vocally; Mme. Gadski, Valentine, very serious, even foreboding, in action and somewhat weighty in vocal style, but a presentable Valentine; Mr. Alvarez, Raoul, on better terms with the pitch than usual tasteful in style, skilful in phrasing and manly in action; Mr. Scotti, De Nevers, handsome, dashing, vocally vigorous; Mr. Journet, St. Bris. a very dark and dire conspirator indeed; Mr. De Reszke, Marcel, somewhat "fat and scant of breath," but

ddenly awakened to new life and vigor Special mention must be made of Mme. Special mention must be made of Mme. Fritzi Scheff's performance of the page. She succeeded in disclosing the wealth of some of her physical charms and the utter poverty of her vocal resources. Her singing of her a ariz d'ertrade was the most futile, tenuous and childish attempt of the sort ever heard on the Metropolitan stage. Such singing would not be acceptable in "comic opera." The young woman sustained the high level of her opening air throughout the evening and further distinguished herself by a persistent search after important positions on the stage.

ing air throughout the evening and further distinguished herself by a persistent search after important positions on the stage.

By way of concluding this roseate view of last evening's lyric treat, it may be mentioned that this French opera had two Frenchmen in the cast. There were also among the principals one Italian, three Poles and one German. The chorus was occasionally heard to enunciate some French. The ballet disported itself amiably and the male dancers enlivened the third scene with capers and extracelas to that ballet music which is one of the common, sistorted, unnatural, immoral and otherwise unmentionable things abhorred by the good Schumann.

Gustave von Seyfertitz, the leading comedian of the Irving Place Theatre, is seriously ill with paralysis of the tongue and has had to withdraw from sill performances. He has been for four seasons a popular actor at the Irving Place.

GOOD WEEK AT THE THEATRES. Clyde Fitch's Latest Play and a New Ger-

man Comedy Two of the Features. Clyde Fitch's latest play, "The Girl With the Green Eyes," will reopen the Savoy Theatre on Christmas night. Clara Bloodgood is put forward as a star and she has been provided with a capable com-pany to help her to success. Miss Bloodgood's stage experience has extended over Philip II. of Spain is unquestionably one of the most fascinating characters in history, but he could hardly have been a Eyes" is in four acts. The play takes its name from the jealous disposition of its

leading character. To-night at the Irving Place Theatre the first production here of the successful German farce-comedy "Sein Trick" will take place. Manager Conried says the play is witty and amusing and had an interesting plot. Beginning to-morro w there will be children's matinées every day at the Irving Place. Last night "Alt Heidelberg" had its fiftieth performance. Silver mugs were given away as souvenirs.

Both Mary Mannering and her husband James K. Hackett, leave town on the last of this week. Miss Mannering has been playing to the capacity of the Garrick in Stubbornness of Geraldine," and her husband has been equally successful in "The Crisis" at Wallack's. Mrs. Langtry succeeds Miss Mannering at the Garrick and George Ade's musical satire. "The Sultan of Sulu," follows Mr. Hackett at Wallack's.

Sultan of Sulu," follows Mr. Hackett at Wallack's.

The best musical play of this season closes at Daly's on Saturday night. "A Country Girl" has made a long stav, but could remain longer with profit. "The Billionaire" is bocked as its successor.

Aubrey Boucicault's version of "Alt Heidelberg" at the Princess Theatre has scored a success. "A Chinese Honeymoon" at the Casino reaches its 250th performance at this house to-night. Silk souvenirs will be distributed.

"The Silver Slipper" is proving a worthy successor to "Florodora." Manager Fisher is constantly adding new features and Stanley Hawkins, Sam Bernard, Cyril Scott and Edna Wallace Hopper are still the fun makers. "The Ninety and Nine" at the Academy of Music also draws big houses.

Julia Marlowe and "The Cavalier" at the Criterion Theatre are doing well. Maxine

Julia Marlowe and "The Cavalier" at the Criterion Theatre are doing well. Maxine Elliqt and Nat Goodwin in "The Altar of Friendship" are in their fourth week at the Knickerbocker; Viola Allen has begun her second month in "The Eternal City" at the Victoria. Miss Allen's rôle, Roma, is a most exacting one, but she fills it creditably.

"Imprudence" and William Faversham have been a big success at the Empire. This comedy is in its three last weeks at the Empire. "The Stickiness of Geraldine" is successful at Weber & Fields's. Francis Wilson and "The Toreador" will furnish lively entertainment to the patrons of the Harlem Opera House this week.

Richard Mansfield and his company have been playing "Julius Cæsar" at the Herald Square for a month now, but there has been no diminution of interest in hisperformance.

no diminution of interest in hisperformance.

Blanche Bates in "The Darling of the Gods" is conceded to be the biggest success of the season. The advance sale of seats at the Balasco Theatre extends now well into March so great is the desire to see this production.

Mrs. Fiske in "Mary of Magdala" at the March to its still drawing will be a season.

Mrs. Fiske in "Mary of Magdala" at the Manhattan is still drawing well.

Mabelle Gilman's singing has carried "The Mocking Bird" to success at the Bijou. The comic opera "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" pleases the patrons of the New York. Eleanor Robson and "Audrey" stay at the Madison Square for the rest of this month.

at the Madison Square for the reactions and the month.

The playhouses that have a weekly change of bill have good attractions this week.

"Are You a Mason?" is at the Metropolis, "Up York State" at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, "A Desperate Chance" at the Grand, "Ten Nights in a Barroom" at the Third Avenue. "Alone In London" at the American, "Monte Christo" at the Murray Hill and the Hanlons' "Superba," an attraction new with each year and ever with more funmaking features, at the New Star. The West End has Denman Thompson in "The Old Homestead."

always interesting.

Proctor's houses have strong bills this week. "Alone in New York" is at 125th street, the Bells of Haslemere at the Fifth Avenue, "Woman against Woman" at the Fifty-eighth, and straight vaudeville at the Twenty-third street house. Keith's vaudeville bill is always high class and this week is no exception.

#### NORDICA'S DAMAGE SUIT.

Trial of Singer's Case Against Southern

Ballroad Soon to Be On. The suit of Lillian Nordica against the Southern Railway Company to recover \$50,000 for injuries which she says she sustained in a collision near Rome, Ga., on Jan. 12, last, will soon come up for trial, Her counsel, A. H. Hummel, has filed her complaint and received the company's

Mme. Nordica alleges that in the collision, which occurred while she was travelling in her private car Brunhilde, with elling in her private car Brunnhilde, with the Metropolitan Opera Company, she was thrown violently out of her bed and was picked up unconscious. She says that as a result she had to cancel many engage-ments and forfeit contracts, sustaining pecuniary damages to the amount of \$18,000. Her own sufferings and the damage to her private car complete the total she sues for. The company, through Stetson, Jen-nings & Russell, its attorneys, denies having been careless or negligent, and, while

nings & Russell, its attorneys, denies having been careless or negligent, and, while admitting the collision, denies having made any special a greement for her transportation, or that she was so seriously injured as she professes.

Mme. Nordica arrived here from England two weeks ago. She kept to her stateroom during the voyage and after her arrival it was announced that she was too ill to sing. The production of "Tristan und Isolde" was postponed for a week on that account.

MAKE-UP FOR AN ACTOR IN JAIL. Lent by Sam Bernard to No. 5,498, Clinton

Sam Bernard, the comedian, was showing to his friends yesterday the following letter he had received:

letter he had received:

DEAR SIR: Will you let me tell you something about our Christmas entertainment? It is the only day in the year when the prison discipline is relaxed, and we generally enjoy ourselves with theatricals. The authorities furnish the scenery and "props," but we have to furnish our own costumes. I have volunteered for a German and Hebrew dialect "turn," and would like to ask you to loan me a costume and make-up, which I will return as soon as the show is over. Even if the make-up is old, I will be very grateful for the favor, as it will tend to make many a heart up here grateful this Christmastide. I do not ask as a stranger, being a member of the profession myself. I made your acquaintance at the Hollis Theatre at a collation given by Mr. Nat C. Goodwin on a New Year's eve. I sat next you at the table, and when you recited "The Face on the Birroom Floor" you drank the champagne from my glass. I was then a member of Goodwin's company, but since then I have fallen from grace. I think you will remember the occasion I refer to. Hoping you will favor me with the make-up, I remain yours theatrically.

CLINTON PRISON.

Bernard says he remembers the incident the letter refers to but he hasn't any idea.

Bernard says he remembers the incident the letter refers to, but he hasn't any idea who the writer is. However, he sent him the outfit.

Mme. Blanvelt Here for a Last Concert

Tour. Lillian Blauvelt returned to this country yesterday on the St. Louis from a concert tour in England, where she took part in a

#### MISS DASKAM TO GIRLS TO BE:

HANG ON TO YOUR PRIVILEGES AND LET YOUR RIGHTS GO."

This Didn't Seem to Suit the Pilgrim Mothers Who Are Pursuing Women's Rights and Have a Foremothers' Day

The 280th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrim mothers from the Mayflower, and incidentally of the landing of the Pilgrim fathers, was celebrated at the Waldorf-Astoria vesterday afternoon by the memers of the New York Legislative League, of which Mrs. Lillie Devereux Blake is president, by what was called a "Pilgrim Mothers' Dinner." The dinner, or luncheon, was in the Astor Gallery and about 200 vomen partook. Mrs. Blake presided. After the tables had been taken away the gathering resolved itself into a meeting to extol the merits of the original mothers and listen to speeches on the evolution of their daughters. Most of the members of

the league are women suffragists. Among the speakers was Miss Josephine Dodge Daskam, whose toast was the "American Girl of the Future." Miss Daskam didn't say at all what the mothers expected her to say.

"The women who are most valiantly anxious to get their rights seem to forget one thing," said she. "They forget that the party of the first part-by that I mean our brother-is to-day right where he was in the beginning. He has the same number of dvantages he always had. The woman of o-day has all these and about 753 more, and yet her shoulders are no broader and her back is no stronger than it ever was. The girl of the future will be obliged to choose between her present privileges and her rights. If this evolution continues I should advise a young girl who asked me what to choose to hang on to her privileges and let her rights go.

"If you cannot in this generation get your ote, you always can get your voter. Women have always influenced man, and I don't see but what that's just as good. There is some danger of women getting what our brothers call the 'big-head.' If the young girl isn't careful her brother may turn like the worm. Whatever we do we should leave him two things. One of these is the conviction that he knows and can do more than we can, las, for instance, looking up our trains for us], and we should leave him his bankbook. He may give us everything else, including his latenkey. "I think there is a great deal of unneces-

sary twaddle these days about the increase sary twaddie these days about the increas-ing strenuousness of the young girl. I don't think she has changed so much. I don't think these little fads of the modern girl and modern woman, such as physical culture, or vegetarianism or Greek grammar to which she must devote at least a morning a week, have changed the woman under-neath. She has no more mind. She may use her mind a little differently, but it's

she uses.
"There are two things which women
must always have had since the creation
to be successful, and those two things are
the same in the far-off islands of the Pacific and in the high school in Massachusetts A woman to be successful must be good and A woman to be successful must be good and she must be charming. You may think of her charm as her parliamentary ability, her oratorical power or her excellent canning of peaches, but she has got to have it. And if she is not good the world can't progress. There may be something interesting in the bad woman, but she can't perpetuate nations, and after all that was the main purpose of our creation, I think, If a woman is good and nothing else, she If a woman is good and nothing else, she will be as dull as anything the world ever made, but if she can be good and charming

her heritage and posterity can ask absolutely nothing better."

Miss Daskam got some applause through her speech, but it was very evident that her remarks did not exactly coincide with the views of some of the mothers. When she finished Mrs. Blake, before introducing the next speaker, said:
"I think we all enjoyed hearing Miss

Daskam's remarks, but possibly if she was a woman in the civil service and had not written books and had not got paid like a man her view point would be somewhat different." Mrs. Blake in her introductory remarks referred to the married woman who had made the school authorities reinstate her as a teacher and said it was one of the

as a teacher and said it was one of the great victories of the year.

"When," she said, "an American woman, although under the Constitution she is a citizen of the United States, marries an Englishman she becomes a subject of King Edward. That is wrong. We should forever be citizens and not be disqualified when we marry foreigners. The flag should protect an American woman the world over and she should never lose her right to it."

right to it."
Among the other speakers were Mrs. Harriet Stanton Blatch, a daughter of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in whose memory the members stood in silence for a few minutes; Miss Henrietta Muller of London, who told of her work on the London school boards; Dr. Phæbe J. B. Waite, Miss T. W. Law and Mrs. Fanny Carpenter, the latter a lawyer. right to it. atter a lawyer.

#### NEW SULLIVAN THEATRE.

Congressman-Elect and Partner Krans

Are to Build One in Harlem. George Kraus announced last evening hat he and Congressman-elect Tim Sullivan, in the ownership of the Dewey Theatre, had just bought a piece of property between East 125th street and East 126th street, near Third avenue, covering an area 70 by 200 feet, for the purpose of erect-

area 70 by 200 feet, for the purpose of erecting a vaudeville theatre on it.

The new owners will take possession on Jan. 1 and will begin work at once. The structure which now occupies the property, and which until recently was used as a dry goods store, will be torn down. Plans for the new theatre are now ready for filing. They provide for a modern fireproof building, containing a theatre and a roof garden.

The theatre is to have a seating capacity.

The theatre is to have a seating capacity of 2,000. The roof garden will be able to accommodate an audience of 1,500. This is to be ready for opening next summer, but the theatre is not expected to be ready until fall.

NO PLAY AT THE PLAYHOUSE, Because Mrs. Osborn's Star, Blanche Ring, Had Tonsilitis.

There was no performance last night at Mrs. Osborn's Playhouse in West Fortyfourth street, because Mrs. Osborn's star, Blanche Ring, had a bad attack of tonsillitis. Miss Ring went to the theatre, but Mrs. Osborn said she ought to be in bed and sent her home again. Then Mrs. Osborn had the announcement made from the stage that there would be no performance.

Mr. Willard in "The Middleman."

E. S. Willard began the last week of his present engagement at the Garden Theatre by the presentation last night of Henry Ar.lu-Jones's "The Middleman." It wast! e only performance of the play which he will only performance of the play which he will give, and there were many who took advartage of this sing e-opportunity to see it. "The Middleman" has contributed as much to Mr. W l ard's fame as almost any other drama in which has has acted. He will play the "Professor's Love Story" to-night and the rest of the week will be taken up with "Tom Pinch." "David Garrick" and "All for Her."

Actor's Son to Cive a Dinner to Cripples. Gibbs Mansfield, the four-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Mansfield, will give a Christmas tree, followed by a dinner, on Wednesday to the cripples at the Free Industrial School for crippled Children, 434 West Fifty-seventh street.

#### LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

Only a few weeks ago Mme. Calvé wrote to a friend in this city that there was no longer any doubt as to her approaching marriage. She was certainly to wed in a short time Henri Cain, the painter and ibrettist, to whom the soprano has been engaged for several years. So many dates for this ceremony have been fixed and then abandoned, that Mme. Calve's friends had long ceased to expect that the wedding would ever take place. Her last letters, however, brought the assurance that there was no longer the slightest uncertainty on the subject. And the date of the happy event had been definitely fixed in the near

event had been definitely fixed in the near future.

But there must have been some change in her plans. M. Cain has indeed been married during the past few weeks and to a singer. But he did not marry Mme. Calvé. His wife was formerly Mile Guiraudon, a soprano at the Opéra Comique, to whom M. Cain has been reported engaged several times in the last year. So when Mme. Calvé returns to this country she will still be able to fuss as of old with her managers over the necessity of announcing her, the only unmarried singer in the company, as "Mme." just because it is the custom.

Alfred Duane Pell, who has just been or dained to the ministry, is probably the richest clergyman in the Episcopal Church. Mr. P. ll inherited a large fortune from his parents. Other relatives left him money and his shrewd operations in real estate have greatly increased the amount of his wealth. He has frequently been a competitor of some of the sharpest real estate speculators in the city during the last few years and has invariably come out of these encounters with profit. He was one of the first to realize the great value that was to accrue ultimately to property in upper Fifth avenue and he bought the handsome Pickhardt house on that thoroughfare just above Seventy-second street at a fraction of its present value. Mr. Pell is an enthusiastic admirer of silver and his specimens of Colonial and English work are said to constitute one of the finest private collections of this kind in existence. He was graduated from Columbia with the class of '87 and to this day there are accounts of his piety in chapel that are a reproach to his fellow students for all time. Mr. Pell, who has been for many years a liberal and zealous Episcopatian, will not undertake active clerical work, but officiate only when he feels inclined. He has never had any regular occupation wealth. He has frequently been a comhas never had any regular occupation other than caring for his large estate. He was never a clubman.

Another new club with an old principle is soon to be opened uptown. Its object will be to provide a meeting place for men whose work or inclination is likely to keep them up late at night. Other sympathie will supposedly exist among the members none of whom is expected to be in the clubnone of whom is expected to be in the club-house before the evening and, at that, rather late evening hours. Previous efforts in the same direction have been made, but have rarely met with success for reasons which nobody quite understood. The purpose that such a club would serve has long been understood, and there was never any difficulty in getting the number of members necessary to the founding of such organizations. Trouble showe I itself usually when the administration of the club was in question. If the word had not usually when the administration of the club was in question. If the word had not lost all its significance, "Bohemian" might best describe the character of the new or ganization, which has now passed beyond the state of a project and become a reality its somewhat unpretentious doors wi soon be opened to the members and its struggle for life will begin. It will indeed be a struggle just as the existence of every new club is at the outset. Any new club which can now be brought to a successful permanence in New York must meet carpetially well some pressing social week. especially well some pressing social need or be managed with great adroitness by

New York has few customs associated with Christmas outside of those that take place within doors. Strangers might search n vain in the streets for any sight, apart losing its hold on the descendants of those persons who have practised it for so many years. On the day before Christmas the carriages belonging to the oldest of the New York families may be seen driving through the streets filled with parcels that are delivered by one member of the family to the various persons for whom they are intended. This is a custom that has prevailed for generations in many of the families whose names are synonymous with the valled for generations in many of the fami-lies whose names are synonymous with the history of New York. Of course, some of their descendants have not clung to the custom, as it required the possession of horses and carriages to be carried out in full. But those who are still able to, ob-serve strictly the old rule of delivering their gifts in person and from their own carriages on Christmas eve.

Insurance against loss now takes so many forms that no new phase of it is surprising. One English company even insured against loss a manager who had invested a large amount in a theatrical production and was so unusually nervous about the success of the enterprise that he made an arrangement with the insurers by which he was to receive a certain sum which would cover the expense of the production in case the receipts did not reach a set amount at the end of a fixed period. But no such complicated form of theatrical insurance as that has yet been heard of here. The last interesting instance of this kind of insurance is reported from Philadelphia, which is the headquarters of a firm of managers controlling the services of one of the most popular comic opera comedians in this country. The enterprise for which they employ him depends, of course, on his personality, and any harm that befell him would entail serious financial loss on his managers. So they have just insured his amount in a theatrical production and was managers. So they have just insured life for \$50,000.

In one of the smartest of the dressmaker shops a beautiful gown was exhibited the other day. One of the women who had ong been a patron of the establishment stopped to admire it. "Beautiful, isn't it?

stopped to admire it. "Beautiful, isn't it?" said the custodian. "The cost is \$600. Why don't you order one like it?"

"You know I never paid you \$600 for a gown in my life," the customer answered. "That is far beyond my regular limit."

"But you don't understand me," insisted the woman in charge. "The gown wouldn't cost you that much. It's made for a customer in the West. But you could have one like it for—say—\$250. That's the New York price."

Yet some New Yorkers believe that they pay higher prices than any one else in the world.

One of those who have suffered through the herding of New York families in apartthe herding of New York families in apartment houses is the postman. When every man had his own front door and mail box the postman was a friend of the family and each Christmas he was remembered in the distribution of gifts.

Nowadays the postman is unknown to most of those whom he serves, and with this loss of personal acquaintance has come an end of the habit of sending a Christmas box to him.

Since the death recently of a well-known

New Yorker the story of his courtship and marriage has been told again. When he was young he was a merchant

When he was young he was a merchant in Cuba, and two or three weeks before one of his periodical visits to this country he wrote to a friend telling him that the time had come for him to marry, and adding:

"I want you to select two or three girls, and from them I shall take my pick."

The friend called his wife to his aid and three of her friends were invited to meet the Cuban merchant at dinner at their country home. One of the young women became the Cuban merchant's bride, though such an outcome of the affair had not been thought possible by the friend who executed the commission. The matriage thought possible by the friend who ex-ecuted the commission. The marriage proved to be a very happy one through the vears in which the former Cuban trader became a conspicuous citizen of New York.

#### FIRE EMPTIES TRUANT SCHOOL

ONE BOY GOT AWAY WHILE GA-BLER PIANO FACTORY BURNED.

Fire-Drill Signal Called 44 Truants Fron Bed to the Confused Street-48 Housed by Gerry Society-Five Alarms or Chief Purroy's First Big Fire.

The first big fire Acting Chief Purroy has had to tackle since he took Croker's place came last night when Ernest Gabler Bros.' piano factory at 214 to 224 East Twenty-second street was practically gutted. Five alarms were sounded. Tene ments abutted on the factory on either ide, the Roman Catholic Church of the Epiphany and its parochial school are in the block, and directly back of the factory, on Twenty-first street, is the New York Truant School, in which were forty-four

In the confusion on the street one truant, an Italian boy, got away. Two others made a dash for liberty, but were caught. The school took the fire calmiy and might have stayed at home, but the crowd in the street insisted that the boys should be taken out. This is the school from which the School Board has just deposed Alfred V. P. Brennan as principal.

When the fire was discovered the forty-four truants were in bed on the third floor, although it was only a little after 8 o'clock. Matron Mary K. Leonard, a sister o' Billy Leonard, "Big Tim" Sullivan's lieutenant.

Leonard, "Big Tim" Sullivan's lieutenant saw the fire and sounded the signal for fir

At the first sound of the gong the boys At the first sound of the gong the boys pick up their shees and stockings, which have been left in a convenient spot beside the bed, in one hand, and with the other grab the rest of their clothes, which are hung on a hook near the bed before retiring. Then the boys are supposed to stand by twos until the order is given to march.

They followed the instructions without the least disorder or confusion, and were marched to the schoolroom on the second floor. Miss Leonard told them to dress and then went to the back of the building to see about the fire. The flames had disappeared and there was little smoke, so Miss Leonard decided that there couldn't be much danger and marched the boys

Appeared and there was little smoke, so Miss Leonard decided that there couldn't be much danger and marched the boys back to the dormitory.

In a minute, however, the flames burst forth again, lighting up the sky.

The crowd in the street began pounding on the door and windows of the school, shouting "Get out! You'll be burned up if you don't!"

The crowd kept up an insistent yelling and John E. Emerich, the orderly, cpened the window on the second floor and shouted, "We're in no danger! Don't worry!"

He forgot to close the window and three boys "skinned out". The boys were Otto Bartel of St. Ann's avenue, The Bronx: Dominick Creia of 36½ Baxter street and Gustav Roboine of 115 Mott street. They got past Miss Leonard and Emerich and dropped from the window to the areaway, about ten feet. Partel was caught by a policeman and a letter-carrier grabbed creia, but Roboine dodged through the crowd and got away.

creia, but Roboine dodged through the crowd and got away.

A patrol wagon was brought from the East Twenty-second street station, and with policemen, reporters and outsiders on guard the boys, five at a time, were put in the wagon until it was filled. Three trips had to be made before the truants were safely in the Vace Twenty second states. in the East Twenty-second street station.

They were kept there until School Commissioner Dr. Haupt and Matron Leonard arranged with the Cerry society to take care of them until it was safe to get them The fire in the factory began in the base

the nee in the factory began in the base-ment and spread up through the building through a court yard in the centre for wagons. The police estimated the damage at \$350,000, which was said to be fully cov-ered by insurance. ered by insurance. Sparks set fire to the roofs of two of the tenements east of the factory, but did little damage. Blazing brands fell on the Epiphany Church roof but the firemen kept the roof wet. The first alarm was sounded at 8:18 and the fifth forty-seven minutes later. There was twenty-five minutes between the fourth

from the crowds, to suggest that this was the holiday season. Old New Yorkers, however, know that there is at least one custom that has survived in some families for years and shows to-day no sign of losing its hold on the descendants of those persons who have practised it for so many years. On the day before Christmas the carriages belonging to the oldest of the New York families may be seen driving through the streets filled with parcels that

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